

LEAFSPOT OF CALLISTEMON SPP.

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In June 1964, an apparently unreported leafspot of *Callistemon* sp. was discovered in Polk County, Florida. Preliminary studies indicate that the causal organism is *Cylindrocladium scoparium* Morgan and that the fungus is pathogenic to *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* Denhardt (red gum), *E. grandis*, *E. pulverulenta* Sims (silver dollar tree), *E. robusta* Smith (swamp mahogany), *E. saligna* Smith (Sydney blue gum), *E. tereticornis* Smith (forest red gum), *Melaleuca leucadendra* L. (punk tree), and two species of *Callistemon*.

**DISTRIBUTION:** *C. scoparium* and its varieties are distributed throughout the world, causing crown canker of roses, leafspotting and damping-off of *Eucalyptus* spp., leafspotting of *Ficus carica* L. (fig) and *Hedera helix* Linn, (ivy), and damping-off and root rot of various Pinaceae. Although *C. scoparium* is not known to be widely distributed throughout the state, it is considered to be a dangerous pathogen capable of causing serious losses to the grower.

**SYMPTOMATOLOGY:** Individual lesions are irregularly circular, 1-5 mm diam., the smallest ones dark purple to black in color, and the largest ones with depressed tan to brown centers surrounded by wide purplish black margins (Fig. 1). When leaves are heavily infected, several lesions may coalesce to form irregular necrotic areas up to 10 mm diam.; leaf distortion and chlorosis are frequently observed; and severe defoliation usually occurs. The pathogen is also capable of causing die-back of stem tips and damping-off of seedlings and cuttings.



Fig. 1. Leaf lesions on *Callistemon* sp. caused by *Cylindrocladium scoparium* Morgan.

**CONTROL:** Daconil or benomyl have been proven effective in controlling cylindrocladium on other hosts. These materials, however, have not been adequately

tested on Callistemon, Eucalyptus, and Melaleuca foliage because in most cases the disease may be controlled by eliminating excessive humidity and moisture (due to over-head watering).